Virginia Sponsored Amtrak Service Update

June 18, 2019

Overview

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Virginia Sponsored Route Ridership

Federal Fiscal Year-to-Date October - May

DRPT

Route 46 (Roanoke) Once Daily

2018	2019	2018 – 2019 Change
136,250	143,624	+7.4%

Route 47 (Newport News) Twice Daily

2018	2019	2018 – 2019 Change
207,804	215,671	+7.1%

Route 50 (Norfolk) Twice Daily

2018	2019	2018 – 2019 Change
98,495	128,422	+68.3%

Route 51 (Richmond) Once Daily

2018	2019	2018 – 2019 Change
108,086	90,856	-35.7%

Virginia Sponsored Routes Total

2018	2019	2018 – 2019 Change
550,635	578,573	+5.1%

- FFY18 – FFY19 Ridership Recovery
  - Acca Yard Construction
  - Weather
  - On-Time Performance

- FFY19 Ridership Increase
  - Hampton Roads Schedule Optimization
  - 2nd Norfolk Train Extension

Urban Crescent Ridership
(Combined Routes 47, 50, and 51)

- Only three months of data.

- DRPT staff will continue to monitor station activity for these three routes.

Urban Crescent Ridership		
May 2018	May 2019	2018 – 2019 Change
53,881	59,714	+5,833 / +10.8%

Urban Crescent Ridership FFYTD		
FFYTD 2018	FFYTD 2019	2018 – 2019 Change
414,385	439,949	+ 25,564 / +6.2%

Washington DC
Richmond
Newport News
Norfolk

Background: Amtrak Service Improvement Plan

- Summer 2018 – DRPT met with Amtrak to discuss service improvements.

- September 2018 – Amtrak responded with a Service Improvement Plan.

- Fall 2018 – DRPT initiated a marketing research plan.

- Spring 2019 – DRPT implemented new discount codes for intra-Virginia travel.

Service Improvement Plan

ON-BOARD COMMUNICATION

Issue: Unclear, inadequate updates at the Station and Onboard. Particularly during service disruptions.

Status: Amtrak updated script and provided training to conductors to improve messaging and announcements.

ON-BOARD CLEANING

Issue: Inadequate cleaning of trains once entered into Virginia creates poor experience.

Status: Cleaners have been assigned to VA services. Improvements seen on customer satisfaction surveys across all Virginia sponsored trains.

Wi-Fi UPGRADES

Issue: Service is slow/unreliable along the Virginia sponsored Amtrak routes.

Status: Amtrak has been running tests, identified the problem and is implementing a solution.

FOOD & BEVERAGE OPTIONS

Issue: Poor choices and high prices.

Status: Upgraded menu options. Amtrak now sells Virginia-made products on Virginia sponsored trains

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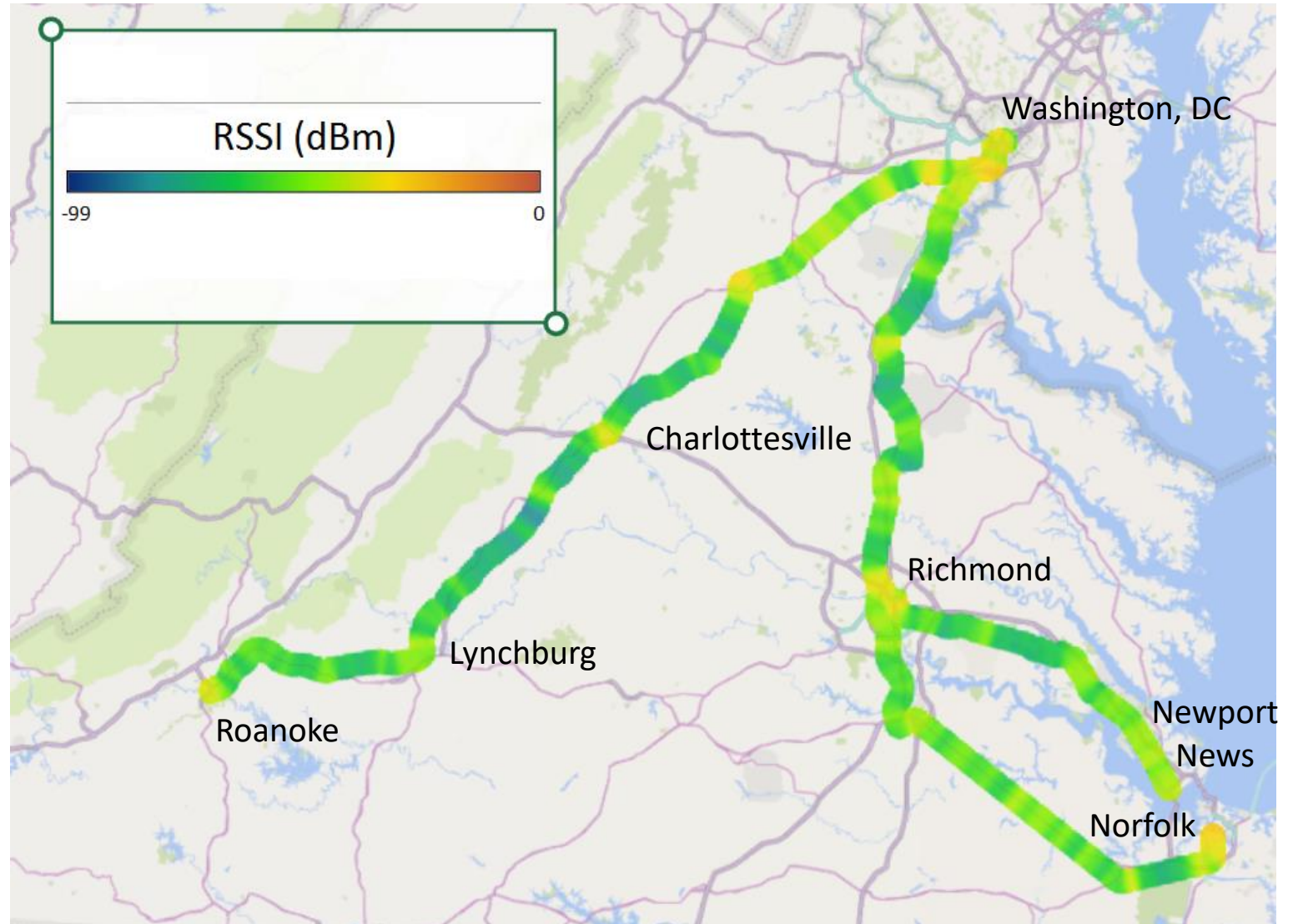**Status:** Upgraded menu options. Amtrak now sells Virginia-made products on Virginia sponsored trains

Wi-Fi Issues

- Tests showed strong signals across Virginia.
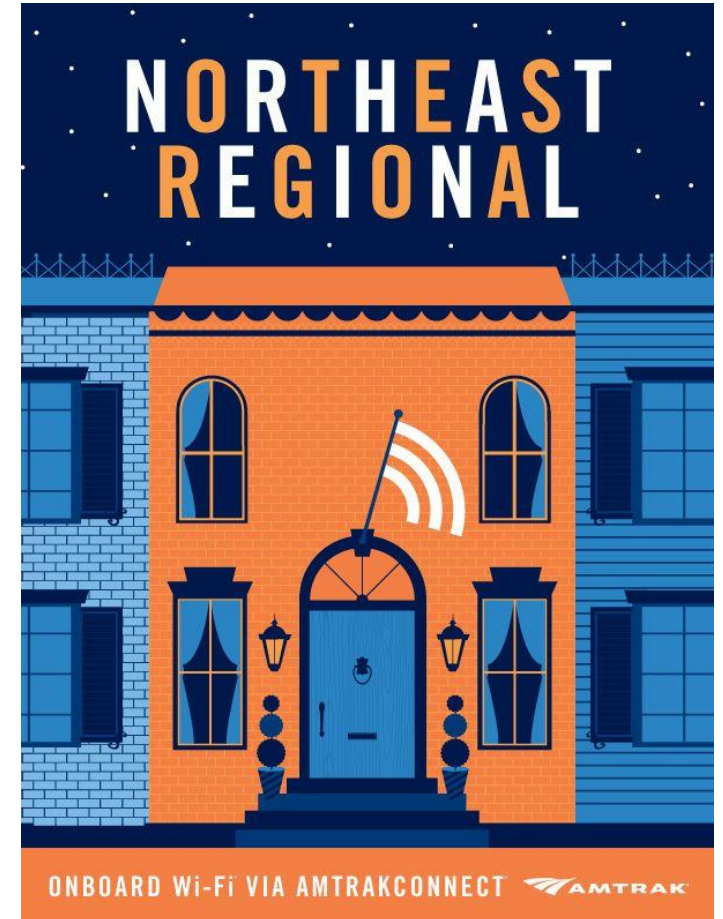
Wi-Fi Issues

- The strong signal readings in Virginia turned Amtrak's attention towards the hardware on board.

- Starting in February 2019, Amtrak began running tests on Virginia trains using the same hardware used on Acela high-speed trains operating on the Northeast Corridor.

Wi-Fi Issues

- After 12 weeks, testing with the Acela hardware showed improved service.

- Amtrak management has decided to update Virginia trains with Acela hardware.

- Starting this summer, passengers on Virginia sponsored trains will begin to see "immediate and noticeable improvement".

DRPT

NORTHEAST REGIONAL

ONBOARD Wi-Fi VIA AMTRAKCONNECT AMTRAK

Customer Satisfaction Index is Already Increasing

Overall, how satisfied were you with the basic Wi-Fi service on the train?

Wi-Fi Issues

Route	FFY18 Year To Date Very Satisfied	FFY19 Year To Date Very Satisfied	Change
46 – Roanoke	40%	53%	+13%
47 – Newport News	45%	60%	+15%
50 – Norfolk	56%	64%	+8%
51 – Richmond	45%	60%	+15%
Amtrak National	48%	60%	+12%

Source: Amtrak Monthly Performance Reports - eCSI Scores

Next Steps

- DRPT Staff will continue to monitor on board Wi-fi for improvement.

- Phase I: Total fleet hardware updates should be complete by the end of September 2019.

- Phase II: Starting in 2020, Amtrak will increase Wi-fi speed.

- Phase II is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2020.

Questions & Comments